

# Woodbury City Update

February 2021 • Volume 22, No. 2



Treated trees on the left compared to untreated trees on the right. Photo provided by Rainbow Treecare

## Council appoints 16 to citizen advisory boards

Sixteen residents were appointed to Woodbury advisory commissions by the City Council in December. All serve on a volunteer basis, and their terms are for three years, unless noted otherwise.

Those appointed were selected from a pool of 31 residents who applied for the advisory board vacancies in October. Council members interviewed candidates in November.

Advisory groups and those appointed include:

### Audit and Investment

**Commission:** Heidi Conrad (reappointed to one-year term), John Lehman (reappointed), Aileen Lyle (reappointed to one-year term) and Andrew Naylor.

### Economic Development

**Commission:** Kwadwo Adutwum, Emanuel Ekstrom (reappointed), Katie Westfall and Michael Zoladkiewicz.

### Parks and Natural Resources

**Commission:** Student representatives (one-year terms): Isaac Eikenberry (Woodbury High School) and Benjamin Sayers (East Ridge High School).

**Planning Commission:** Ryan Christenson and Avin Kallenbach. Student representatives (one-year term): Francisco Andruet (Woodbury High School) and Jefferson McGough (East Ridge High School).

### South Washington County Telecommunications

**Commission:** Robert James and Randy Olson (both reappointed to two-year terms).

The Council also selected chairpersons for the commissions. They are: Blake Darsow, Audit and Investment Commission; Craig Johnson, Economic Development Commission; Greta Bjerkness, Parks and Natural Resources Commission; and Shannon Olsen, Planning Commission.

As new appointees are named, the City Council wishes to acknowledge those who have completed their service on city boards and commissions. They include: Ken Johnson, Audit and Investment Commission; Gina Kazmerski, William Ludwig and Radhika Upadrashta, Economic Development Commission; Jakob Neau (student representative), Parks and Natural Resources Commission; Sydney Bramel (student representative), Sonia Das, Jerad Ducklow and Falan Walker (student representative), Planning Commission.

Residents interested in serving on any of the city's advisory boards may apply for openings annually. Applications generally are accepted in October, with interviews in November. Commissioners' terms begin in January.

## Emerald ash borer treatment options

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is an invasive beetle that attacks and destroys ash trees by feeding under the bark. This feeding disrupts the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. EAB spreads very quickly and has become one of the most destructive urban forest pests in history. Once EAB has visibly infested a tree, it has an almost zero chance of survival.

The Woodbury Forestry Division began implementing various EAB management practices since the pest was first detected in Minnesota in 2009. This included inspecting hundreds of ash trees on public land, proactively removing low quality ash trees in parks and in boulevard areas, and planting replacement trees on public land ahead of the removals where appropriate. When EAB was first confirmed in Woodbury in August 2017, about 13 percent of trees in Woodbury parks were ash (only includes mowed areas).

### EAB treatment options

Early detection and preventive treatments with approved insecticides can prolong the life of an ash tree. Tree contractors with pesticide applicators licenses should be consulted to discuss treatment options. Before deciding to treat your tree, educate yourself about the pros and cons of these chemicals. The city recommends the trunk injection application method; the soil drench application method has a higher risk for unwanted environmental effects. Keep in mind that there is no "cure" for EAB infestation and insecticide treatments will be needed every one to three years, depending on the chemical used. Hire a certified arborist with a pesticide applicator's license to perform these treatments.

The city has partnered with Rainbow Treecare to implement a citywide bulk discount ash tree treatment program for residents and businesses. The program, in its third year, has allowed for the treatment of 1,752 public and private trees in Woodbury. In 2020, Rainbow Treecare treated 66 public and 822 private ash trees. Information is available on the city's website at [woodburymn.gov/eab](http://woodburymn.gov/eab).

### What can homeowners do?

If you have an ash tree, you have a choice to protect or remove your tree(s). The city recommends protecting large, well-placed, healthy private ash trees as part of an EAB program.

Here are some tips:

- Learn how to identify the presence of EAB. Look for thinning canopy or dead sections, woodpecker activity, D-shaped holes on the bark.
- Contact the city before removing or treating ash trees in the public right-of-way near the street (boulevard trees), as these may be managed by the city or your homeowners association (HOA) in some areas. Call the Public Works Department at 651-714-3720 with questions.
- Removal companies usually will dispose of the tree for you. All ash wood should be properly destroyed within Woodbury.
- To prevent spread, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) recommends pruning and removing ash trees from October through April when EAB is dormant. Avoid pruning and removal of ash trees during May through September, when EAB is active.

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# Council Perspective

By Mayor Anne Burt

## A look ahead at what's coming in 2021

We are ready to embrace the many opportunities and challenges that lie ahead in 2021. I want to share more about our strategic priorities and key projects we'll be working on this year.

### Strategic issues

Every two years, the City Council reserves time for study and ideation around emerging, critical issues facing Woodbury. Council identifies two or three urgent, high priority focus areas. Staff then designates an implementation team with a clearly identified team leader and reports to Council at least once a year on outcomes or as dictated by the initiative timeline. The strategic issues for the 2019-2021 cycle are:

**1. Ensure Long-Term Drinking Water Sustainability** – On the 2019 Community Survey, residents indicated concern related to the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in our groundwater. The city has removed seven wells from service since 2017 due to PFAS, constructed a temporary water treatment facility in 2020 to treat PFAS, and put four of these seven wells back into service with the treatment facility. This strategic initiative focuses on providing the necessary research, detail and information on long-term drinking water sustainability for the community. The goal is to ensure the City Council can make informed, long-term and strategic decisions regarding the future of the City of Woodbury's water quality, treatment, and its financial sustainability. See the related article on page 3 for more about water quality and our progress in this area.

**2. Ensure Our Parks and Trails Meet the Needs of a Growing and Changing Community** – One of our community's greatest assets is our extensive parks and trails system, which includes more than 150 miles of paved trails, 3,300 acres of park land, 76 sport courts, 123 athletic fields,

31 park buildings, 46 play structures, and more than 17,000 park trees. This strategic initiative will help the City Council make informed, long-term and strategic decisions regarding preserving and enhancing our parks, forestry and recreation system through a financial plan to sustain them into the future.

**3. Adapt and Enhance Public Safety Effectiveness** – The public safety environment is ever evolving and continues to change to represent and support local demographics, service demands, labor negotiations, city growth and development, how services are funded, city staffing and succession, state and national political influence and more. This strategic initiative will help the City Council make informed, long-term and strategic decisions regarding not only our Public Safety Department, but the public safety of the community as well.

There are many other key current and upcoming projects and initiatives worth highlighting. While I have limited space here, I'll be touching on many more items in my annual State of the City presentation, which will be shared with you through a video in March. For now, here are some highlights:

### Ongoing pandemic response

The federal government is leading the COVID-19 vaccine dispersal, distributing vaccines to each state weekly. Then, each state distributes the vaccines to regional distribution sites, generally county Public Health Departments.

Washington County Public Health is required to follow Minnesota Department of Health guidance for allocating and prioritizing the COVID-19 vaccine. They are currently working through Phase 1a1, which includes emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. Our Fire/EMS staff have been given the opportunity to receive the vaccine, and police officers are next in the queue.

### Development

Despite the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, the city experienced a significant amount of new commercial construction in 2020, with five new commercial buildings adding more than 172,000 square feet of new space.

The largest of these new commercial projects is Kindeva Drug Delivery, a 137,000-square-foot facility being constructed north of Hudson Road and east of Settlers Ridge Parkway. Kindeva specializes in solving complex drug delivery challenges for its pharmaceutical and biotechnology customers and will bring about 150 jobs to Woodbury in 2021, with additional job growth anticipated. Construction is underway and they plan to be open for business this summer.

### Road construction

As usual in Minnesota, we'll be busy repairing and enhancing our local roadways beginning late this spring.

Washington County will be working on phase two of the Woodbury Drive improvement project between I-94 and Tamarack Road that began last year. This year's work will involve the reconstruction of Tamarack Road, Commerce Drive, Rivertown Drive and Hudson Road.

Further south, the county is expected to begin work on Woodbury Drive between Bailey Road and Dale Road. This project will increase capacity with a four-lane divided roadway design and includes the addition of a roundabout at Dale Road.

In addition, the intersection at Lake Road and Pioneer Drive is proposed to be reconstructed this year. At this time, a single lane roundabout or traffic signal upgrade is under consideration for traffic control, replacing the existing four-way stop. The project will include various pedestrian improvements at Lake Road and Pioneer Drive, as well as at Blue Ridge Drive and Juniper Lane. Construction is anticipated to begin in May or June and wrap up in October.

In conjunction with the Lake Road/Pioneer Drive intersection improvements, portions of Lake Road between Woodlane Drive and Pioneer Drive will be converted from a four-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway. This part of the project could take place in 2021 or 2022, depending on the availability of grant funding.

### Public engagement

As we move forward, I encourage you to engage in these activities. The City Council generally meets three times per month: Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month and one workshop discussion takes place on the third Wednesday of the month. Most of these meetings take place in the Council Chambers at City Hall, but residents are encouraged to join virtually during the pandemic. Visit [woodburymn.gov](http://woodburymn.gov) for details. We are also planning two virtual "town hall" sessions this year on specific topics yet to be determined. Watch for more information about these sessions via the city's website, social media accounts, InTouch email notification system and this newsletter.

In an effort to increase our communication and engagement with our residents and businesses beyond formal Council meetings and workshops, the City Council also is planning to have a presence at many of our annual community events in the future. So once we can hold favorite community get-togethers safely again, come find us. I look forward to seeing you all soon!

The Woodbury newsletter is published 10 times per year by the City of Woodbury and mailed to all residents and businesses. Send comments to: Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-3330. Phone: 651-714-3500. Email: [jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov](mailto:jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov).

Mayor: Anne Burt. Council Members: Andrea Date, Steve Morris, Jennifer Santini and Kim Wilson. City Administrator: Clint Gridley. Communications Manager: Jason Egerstrom.

The City of Woodbury is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In accordance with the act, the Woodbury newsletter is available in other formats. Call Jason Egerstrom, 651-714-3500; TDD: 651-714-3568.

## Reduce water use through water efficiency incentive programs

For the fifth consecutive year, the City of Woodbury is aiming to reduce summer water use by offering a discounted smart irrigation program to residents.

Woodbury homeowners can join the waiting list to purchase a WaterSense-certified smart irrigation controller through the city at a discounted rate of \$35 (retail value is \$230).

In the last five years, more than 2,600 Woodbury residents purchased smart controllers through this program. Join your neighbors by visiting [woodburymn.gov/smartirrigation](http://woodburymn.gov/smartirrigation), and get on the waiting list for the 2021 program. Residents on the list will be notified when the program opens in March.

### Commercial and Association-Managed Irrigation Systems

Commercial and homeowners association properties located within Woodbury with irrigation meters (using city water) are eligible to receive funding assistance for improvements that reduce water use.



Approved projects will receive 50 percent funding assistance up to \$8,000 for one or more improvements:

- Upgrading your controller to be WaterSense certified
- Adding weather-sensing technology
- Replacing sprinkler heads with high efficiency models
- Completing an audit

Property managers and board members should work with their irrigation contractor to decide what efficiency improvements are right for their system.

Over the last four years, 62 properties have participated in this program and have received approximately \$245,000 in city funding. These properties are

helping to save millions of gallons of water per year.

This is the last year the city will be offering the commercial program, so apply while there's still time! Those interested in participating in the 2021 program must apply by Friday, May 14, at [woodburymn.gov/commercialirrigation](http://woodburymn.gov/commercialirrigation).

Projects must receive city approval before hiring a contractor or spending funds. Improvements made in previous years are not eligible. Project applications will be reviewed and applicants will be notified by Friday, June 4.

Questions? Contact the Engineering Department at 651-714-3593 or [water@woodburymn.gov](mailto:water@woodburymn.gov).

## Please clean up after your pet!

Woodbury's expansive network of trails and parks are used year-round. Unsightly messes left behind by those who don't pick up after their pet are harmful to local water bodies. As the snow melts, water carries the bacteria from leftover pet waste to our wetlands, streams and lakes. Pet waste carries *E. coli* bacteria, which is potentially dangerous.

City ordinances require pet owners to carry supplies for excrement removal when walking a pet off their property. All messes on public property, including the off-leash dog park, or on the private property of others must be cleaned up. Pets must be leashed anytime they are off their owner's property. The city has received several complaints about unleashed dogs and pet feces left on public trails this winter.

Summaries of the animal control ordinances pertaining to pets are available at City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, or on the city's website at [woodburymn.gov](http://woodburymn.gov).

## Work continues on drinking water protection plan for East Metro

In February 2018, the State of Minnesota and the 3M Company settled their lawsuit regarding natural resource damages associated with a group of chemicals known as poly- and per-fluorochemicals (PFAS) found in East Metro groundwater.

Since that time, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have been working with East Metro communities, including Woodbury, to develop a long-term drinking water protection plan to address PFAS in the water.

In September 2020, the MPCA and DNR announced a \$700 million long-term drinking water protection plan that revealed three draft options that would provide safe and sustainable drinking water.

Woodbury, along with the other East Metro communities impacted by PFAS, provided feedback on several items in

the state's draft options in December 2020. The MPCA and DNR expect to finalize the Conceptual Drinking Water Supply Plan in 2021.

The supporting documents and more information about the work being completed are available on the state's 3M Settlement website at [3msettlement.state.mn.us/DrinkingWaterSupply](http://3msettlement.state.mn.us/DrinkingWaterSupply).

### Temporary treatment

The water the city delivers to customers continues to meet all state and federal standards and guidelines for PFAS.

The 3M Company made PFAS at its Cottage Grove facility from the late 1940s until 2002. PFAS wastes were disposed of at multiple sites in Washington County. The source of the PFAS in Woodbury's groundwater has been identified as these disposal sites.

The Minnesota Department of Health has established health standards for PFAS and has issued health risk advisories on seven of Woodbury's 19 wells since 2017. The city removed these wells from service and, in early 2020 – through previous agreements between the State of Minnesota and 3M – the State of Minnesota funded the construction of the temporary water treatment facility north of Valley Creek Road and east of Tower Drive. The facility is treating four of the seven wells that were taken out of service and will help the city meet water demand over the next five years until Woodbury's long-term solution is implemented. The three PFAS impacted wells not being treated remain out of service and the city continues to coordinate with the MDH on monitoring the water system for PFAS.



*The city constructed a temporary water treatment plant in 2020.*

Watch for updates through the city's communications channels. Learn more at [woodburymn.gov/pfas](http://woodburymn.gov/pfas).

For specific questions about the city's water system, contact Public Works at 651-714-3720 or [publicworks@woodburymn.gov](mailto:publicworks@woodburymn.gov).



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Postal Patron  
Woodbury, MN

## Woodbury City Update

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### Summer jobs available with the city

Are you seeking summer employment opportunities lasting from three to six months?

The City of Woodbury is now taking applications for summer seasonal positions for our maintenance, golf course and recreation programs.

Positions available include:

- Pee Wee Sports coach
- Puppet wagon puppeteers
- Playground program leaders
- Camp Carver leaders
- Lifeguard
- HealthEast Sports Center summer outdoor fields attendant
- Youth sports instructors for tennis, soccer, t-ball, etc.
- Maintenance in the Parks and Forestry Divisions with responsibilities including athletic fields, forest-

ry, horticulture, irrigation, mowing, building cleaning, trash/recycling duties and more (three-month and six-month positions available).

- Maintenance in the Utilities Division with responsibilities including hydrant flushing, gate valve exercising, gate valve repair, lawn care, and general utility maintenance. Time can be used toward earning water or sewer licensing (three-month and six-month positions available).
- Maintenance in the Streets Division with duties including street and stormwater maintenance, signs and traffic control maintenance (three-month and six-month positions available).

There are also several positions available at Eagle Valley Golf Course, including:



- Golf course maintenance worker
- Golf shop attendant
- Food and beverage attendant (must be at least 18 years old)
- Starter/ranger
- Outside service

The minimum age requirement is 16 for golf course and recreation positions. Applicants for the Utilities, Streets and Parks maintenance positions must be at least 18 years old.

Interested individuals should apply online at [woodburymn.gov](http://woodburymn.gov). Select the blue "Employment" tab on the home page. Call 651-714-3500 or email [hr@woodburymn.gov](mailto:hr@woodburymn.gov) with questions.

### Emerald ash borer... from page 1

Residents of an HOA community should learn how many ash trees are a part of their community. Encourage your HOA board to get an ash tree inventory and develop a plan to remove or protect the appropriate trees. Working with a certified arborist, communities can create a proactive, budget-friendly EAB management plan to protect trees.

For more information about EAB, visit [woodburymn.gov/eab](http://woodburymn.gov/eab). If you are interested in having your tree evaluated, as part of the partnership with the City of Woodbury, Rainbow Treecare offers free consultations and city-wide treatment discounts. Learn more at [rainbowtreecare.com/woodbury](http://rainbowtreecare.com/woodbury).

Much more information about EAB also is available on the MDA website at [mda.state.mn.us/eab](http://mda.state.mn.us/eab).